APPENDIX M: RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

The following contain the formal responses to the comments received during the circulation of the DEIR/EA. The response numbers correspond to the same comment number presented in Appendix L.

Workshop Comments

Response W1a
Alternative 10D-3, with project limits between Sunrise Boulevard and Watt Avenue, has been selected as the preferred alternative. As a result, proposed improvements west of Watt Avenue, including sound walls, are no longer included as part of the project.

Response W1b
A section regarding greenhouse gases has been added to the EIR/EA. Please see Section 2.12.4 of the EIR/EA.

Response W1c
Local governments, the Sacramento Area Council of Governments, the California Department of Transportation, the California Transportation Commission, and the voting public make the decisions regarding how transportation funding will be distributed. This project was identified for funding within the voter approved Sacramento County Measure A sales tax measure. The project received additional funding from the State of California's Proposition 1B Corridor Mobility Improvement Account. Both Measure A and Proposition 1B dedicate separate funding for transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and highway projects to ensure a balanced transportation system that accommodates and expands all modes to meet forecast demand. In fact, approximately 38% of funds from Measure A is allocated to transit.

Response W1d
Comment noted.

Response W1e
Under Alternative 10D-1, the westbound bus/carpool lane would end approximately 1/2 mile before the 26th Street exit. An advanced warning sign would be placed 1 mile prior to help motorists get into their desired lane. The transition to the exit would be smooth and gradual. This transition has been used throughout the State without adverse effects on traffic safety. However, Alternative 10D-3, which does not extend into the City of Sacramento, is the preferred alternative.

Response W1f
The lane shifts would be gradual, occurring over a 1/4 mile. Furthermore, the bus/carpool lane would not terminate as a 'trap lane', but rather convert to a general purpose lane that would avoid last minute merges from bus/carpool traffic continuing west. However, Alternative 10D-3, which does not extend into the City of Sacramento, is the preferred alternative.

Response W1g
Comment noted.

Response W1h
CEQA does not require a public hearing or meeting on a DEIR, nor does it specify the format of the public hearing or meeting (Guidelines Sec. 15087(1)). The public meetings were held in an "Open House" forum to allow people the opportunity to attend the workshop on a drop-in basis and to arrive at a time that best fits their schedule. This style is relaxed, efficient and personable, providing attendees the opportunity to meet with staff members on a one-on-one basis to address all questions and concerns the individuals may have with the project. In Caltrans' experience, this meeting format has been very successful in obtaining public comment and providing information.

For those persons who wished to present additional comments, comment cards were provided during the workshop. The public was also invited to e-mail their comments to Public_Information_Office@dot.ca.gov, visit the project website at www.dot.ca.gov/dist3/projects/, or contact Caltrans directly with their questions and concerns.

Response W1i
Please refer to Response W1j.

Response W1j
Regarding vehicle miles traveled (VMT), on a regional basis, the addition of bus/carpool lanes would not cause an increase in VMT. Bus/carpool lanes would add capacity, resulting in an increase in VMT during the peak commute periods only. However, the overall total VMT for the corridor would remain unchanged, as it is a function of land use and population growth. Land use decisions made by local jurisdictions in the region control VMT. The daily VMT would not be affected by the addition of bus/carpool lanes. The existing congestion on US 50 has occurred as a result of urban and suburban development along the corridor, which will continue, with or without this project. As stated in Section 2.2.1 of the EIR/EA, the growth inducement analysis for this project assumes that Sacramento County's population is going to increase by approximately 400,000 residents by 2025 whether or not this project is constructed.

The Transportation Research Board - National Research Council Special Report 245 (Expanding Metropolitan Highways: Implications for Air Quality and Energy Use) states that many factors are responsible for VMT growth, including expansion of capacity. It states that highway VMT increases in response to population growth, rising personal income, increased automobile ownership, regional economic growth, effective reductions in fuel prices, and land use policies that favor dispersed development patterns. Although expansion of capacity can interact with these factors to expedite growth in VMT, adding bus/carpool lanes to a mature, well-developed freeway corridor, such as US 50 between Sunrise Blvd. and Watt Avenue, would not trigger a large amount of growth in traffic volumes. As population growth along the corridor increases, VMT will increase.

Any increase in demand resulting from the added capacity of the bus/carpool lanes would be from a combination of vehicular demand waiting in upstream bottlenecks and from traffic that has diverted from other parallel routes. Diversion to the freeway and off of local streets is anticipated because the bus/carpool lane addition reduced congestion.

The project is not at odds with land use plans. The proposed bus/carpool lanes are among the improvements proposed as part of the Sacramento Area Council of Government's (SACOG) Preferred Regional Blueprint Scenario for 2050. SACOG has identified the Preferred Blueprint Scenario as being consistent with its own "smart growth" principles, principles that include compact development, infill development, mixed land uses, and resource conservation.

SACOG's Regional Blueprint planning process used computer modeling to develop four land use scenarios for the Sacramento region in 2050. All four scenarios included the proposed bus/carpool lanes. Only one of these four scenarios was anticipated to result in low-density growth and a greater jobs-housing imbalance in the region's communities.

Voters in Sacramento County also approved the renewal of Measure A, which specifically listed bus/carpool lanes on US 50 as one of the projects to be funded through the Sales Tax Measure. Sacramento County and the Sacramento Area Council of Governments include the bus/carpool lanes their adopted transportation plans.

Response W1k
The potential alignment of an Elk Grove-Rancho Cordova-El Dorado Connector road is being studied as a means of connecting south Sacramento County with western El Dorado County. That project was identified to receive funding from the new Measure A sales tax.

Response W1l
Comment noted. Please contact Sacramento Regional Transit regarding transit concerns (access, parking, lighting, and double tracking).

Response W1m
Alternative 10D-3 will not increase traffic volumes exiting to Watt Avenue. Commuters bound for Watt Avenue will travel there with or without this project, thus existing travel patterns will not be affected. Commuters using the bus/carpool lane will transition into the existing inside lane near Watt Avenue, and continue their trip towards the downtown area.

Response W1n
Comment noted. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2009.

Response W1o
Comment noted. As stated in the EIR/EA, the No-Build Alternative would not implement any of the improvements involved in the project, meet the need and purpose of the project, or give commuters incentive to use buses or carpools during peak commute periods. Alternative 10D-3 has been selected as the project preferred alternative.

Response W1p
Caltrans responsibility is to maintain mobility on the State's highway system. Caltrans does not have land use authority. Land use decisions are the responsibility of local governments, which allow or restrict development, and can lead to urban sprawl. The bus/carpool lanes are being built as a response to travel demand from existing and approved development. Bus/carpool lanes provide travel time advantages to users of the lanes and encourage use of more efficient travel modes. The net effect is moving more people in fewer vehicles on the state highway system, while reducing fuel consumption and automobile pollutants. Caltrans considers the US 50 Bus/Carpool Lane project to be one project within an interdependent multimodal transportation system that includes a regional bus/carpool network, regional passenger rail service, light rail service, express bus/local bus service, bicycle routes, pedestrian facilities, local roads, goods movement corridors, and air service. Bus/carpool lanes provide a time travel advantage for people who travel together and take transit. Please refer to Responses W1c and L7a.

Response W1q
Please refer to Response W1p.

Response W1r
Please refer to Responses W1p.

Response W1s
Please refer to Response W1h.

Response W1t
Please refer to Response W1a.

Response W1u
Sound wall EB3 did not meet the feasible and reasonable criteria and was recommended as a potential "community enhancement." Please refer to Response W1a.

Response W1v
Please refer to Response W1a.

Response W1w
Please refer to Response W1e. Alternative 10D-3, which does not extend west of Watt Avenue, has been selected as the project preferred alternative.

Response W1x
The White Rock Road expansion is not part of this project. However, in concept, Caltrans generally supports local road projects that provide parallel capacity to the highway system so that local trips don't need to be made on the highway. Additionally, Caltrans, SACOG, and Sacramento County coordinated to obtain Proposition 1B funding for the While Rock Road expansion.

Response W1y
As stated in the EIR/EA, the No-Build Alternative would not implement any of the improvements involved in the project, meet the need and purpose of the project, or give commuters incentive to use buses or carpools during peak commute periods. Alternative 10D-3 has been selected as the project preferred alternative.

Response W1z
Caltrans does not have the power to redirect the currently identified funding for the project. The Sacramento Transportation Authority authorizes Measure A funding. The California Transportation Commission authorizes Corridor Mobility Improvement Account monies from Proposition 1B.

Response W1aa
Comment noted.

Response W1bb
As detailed in the EIR/EA and the Traffic Study, one of the purposes of bus/carpool lanes is to move more people in fewer vehicles. As commuters switch from single-occupant automobiles to multi-occupant vehicles, such as buses, carpools, and vanpools, the people-moving capacity of the freeway is increased, while reducing the number of vehicles on the freeway.

Response W1cc
Caltrans does not have authority to impose or enforce parking requirements. Parking facilities are determined by the local jurisdiction based on the associated land use and transit service. The City of Sacramento has an approved Central City Parking Master Plan based on its land use assumptions. The City of Sacramento has an approved Central City Parking Master Plan. Please refer to Response L7h.

Also note that Alternative 10D-3 has been selected as the project preferred alternative (Alternative 10D-3 does not extend into downtown Sacramento).

Response W1dd
The legislatively enacted provision to allow authorized hybrid vehicles to use bus/carpool lanes has not been in effect for a sufficient time for Caltrans to make determinations regarding its impacts to bus/carpool lanes in the Sacramento region.

Response W1ee
By definition, two people in a car constitute a carpool. Please refer to Response E20a regarding three person carpools.

Response W1ff
Please refer to Response W1p.

Response W1gg
There are a variety of public processes at local, regional, and State agencies to determine what transportation projects are planned and funded. Voters in Sacramento County approved the US 50 Bus/Carpool lanes as a component of the project list for the Measure A sales tax renewal.

Response W1hh
Caltrans does not have land use authority. Regarding this proposed project, land use authority belongs to the cities of Sacramento and Rancho Cordova and Sacramento County.

Response W1ii
Please refer to Response W1h.

Response W1jj
Please refer to Response W1p.

Response W1kk
Please refer to Response W1p.

Response W1ll
Please refer to Response W1p.

Response W1mm
Please refer to Response W1h.

Response W1nn
Please refer to Response W1p.

Response W2a
Pedestrian mobility across freeways is important. As a part of this US 50 Bus/Carpool Lane project, two Pedestrian Over Crossings (POC) will be replaced with new structures to meet standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act; the Manlove POC east of Watt Avenue and the White Rock POC west of Zinfandel Drive. Continuous pedestrian access across US 50 at these two points will be maintained while first the new structures are built, then the existing structures removed.

Please note that changes to the top of the 59th Street over crossing are not scoped as part of this project. Coordination between Caltrans, the City of Sacramento, and neighborhood associations would be needed to determine whether "three of the lanes are not necessary" and what, if any, "softening" could occur on the crossing. Note that Alternative 10D-3, which does not extend into the City of Sacramento, is the preferred alternative.

Response W2b
Please refer to Response W1h.

Notices regarding the two public open house workshops were sent to nearly 37,000 property owners one mile from the project. The notice also appeared in the Sacramento Bee Regional Sections on December 14, 2006 and January 4, 2007 (Arden/Carmichael, East and North/City) and in the Folsom Telegraph on December 13, 2006 and January 3, 2007. The notices clearly explained the format of meeting (open house workshop) and the duration (3 hours). Please see Chapter 8 of the EIR/EA for a copy of the public notice.

Response W2c
Please refer to Response W1p.

Response W2d
Local land use authorities such as cities and counties can require that transit be fully integrated into new developments and can implement development impact fees that pay for that system expansion. Caltrans does not have that authority. Bus/carpool lanes are intended for carpools and buses to move more people in fewer vehicles. Please refer to Response W1gg.

Response W2e
Sound walls (WB5 and WB6) are proposed along westbound US 50 adjacent to the mobile home park and on each side of Routier Road. Please refer to Section 2.13.3 and Figure 2.1-1k in the EIR/EA.

Response W2f
A sound wall (EB9) is proposed along eastbound US 50 where Folsom Boulevard crosses under the freeway. The length of Sound wall EB9 was extended to the west until the noise reduction was less than 5 dBA at the homes along Folsom Boulevard. At that point the train noise from light rail and the traffic noise on Folsom Boulevard were louder than the reduced noise from the freeway. Please refer to Section 2.13.3 and Figure 2.1-1h in the EIR/EA.

Response W2g
Please refer to Response W2e.

Email Comments

Response E1a
Funding is one of the constraints to extending the bus/carpool lanes west of Watt Avenue on US 50. Extending the bus/carpool lanes from their current terminus, at Sunrise Boulevard, to Watt Avenue has independent utility and provides a significant travel time advantage during peak traffic periods to carpools and buses. Future extension of the bus/carpool lanes into downtown Sacramento would then require another environmental analysis.

Response E2a
Please refer to Response W1j.

Response E3a
Please refer to Response W1a.

Response E4a
Under CEQA, the comment period is normally 45 days. The comment period for the DEIR/EA was extended an additional 15 days, to 60 days (from December 13, 2006 to February 13, 2007). Notices regarding the two public open house workshops were sent to nearly 37,000 property owners one mile from the project. The notice also appeared in the Sacramento Bee Regional Sections on December 14, 2006 and January 4, 2007 (Arden/Carmichael, East and North/City) and in the Folsom Telegraph on December 13, 2006 and January 3, 2007. The project also appeared in numerous newspaper articles during the 60-day review period, including in December 15, 2006 (Sacramento Business Journal) and December 31, 2006, January 22, 2007, and February 5, 2007 (Sacramento Bee).

The two public open house workshops were scheduled on January 10 and 11, 2007, about halfway during the comment period. Scheduling the meetings at the beginning of the comment period would have been too close to Christmas; scheduling the workshops toward the end of the period would not have allowed enough time for comments.

The comment submittal date was clearly stated in the public notices mailed to property owners and in the notices published in the local newspapers. The comment period was also highlighted on the project website. Please see Chapter 8 of the EIR/EA for a copy of the public notice.

Response E4b
The project is part of a bus/carpool network proposed for the region. Whether or not all or part of the network is eventually constructed depends on several factors, including funding. The local governments have their respective city master plans, bicycle and pedestrian plans, and other master plans that are intended to create a multi modal transportation network. Furthermore, Caltrans encourages flexible schedules to deal with traffic issues and reduce the number of commute days. Caltrans also developed a transportation incentive program to encourage employees to use alternate means of transportation when commuting to and from work. Employees using an authorized transportation method, which includes public transportation and vanpools, may receive a subsidy to apply toward their monthly transportation cost.

Under the 511 Sacramento Region Travel Info Program, SACOG maintains a rideshare database, vanpool incentive program, and a list of park and ride lots.

Response E4c
Bus/carpool ramps were included with several project alternatives, but rejected because they would require taking an existing lane on the already congested W-X section downtown. The City of Sacramento and local residents' opposition to the bus/carpool ramps was also considered.

Response E4d
Alternative 10D-3 has been selected as the project preferred alternative. Please refer to Section 1.6.1 of the EIR/EA.

Response E5a
Please refer to Response W2e. Chapter 2.12 in the EIR/EA details potential air quality impacts.

Response E6a
The project is inconsistent with the County's current General Plan, as has been noted in the EIR/EA. However, neither the Air Quality Study nor the Traffic Study prepared for this project supports the General Plan's critique of the proposed project. The project is neither expected to worsen traffic congestion nor degrade air quality. Further, the suggestion that an HOV lane network could be more cost-effectively achieved by designating an existing lane for bus / carpool use is technically correct: HOV lanes could be cost-effectively developed in this manner. However, the Traffic Study indicates that the resulting congestion would create a future situation worse than what would be expected with no improvements. Also, Circulation Policy 2 demonstrates the County's commitment to a regional perspective in land use and transportation planning. In Implementation Measure A5, the County commits to working with SACOG to develop a regional transportation plan. The proposed project is included in the regional transportation plan developed by SACOG. Note that Sacramento County is currently updating its general plan (please refer to Response E6b).

Response E6b
Alternative 10D-3 has been selected as the project preferred alternative. Alternative 10D-3 does not extend into the City of Sacramento.

Even though the City of Sacramento voted against the project, twice, the project still has strong support in the region. As stated in Section 1.10 of the EIR/EA, the project was part of Measure A Half-Cent Sales Tax, which was approved by 74% of Sacramento County voters and 76% of City of Sacramento voters. According to a September 27, 2004 Sacramento Bee article, Measure A was also supported by the American Lung Association and the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District. The project was also included in State-wide Proposition 1B funding, approved by 62% of Sacramento County voters.

In February 2007, SACOG conducted a public opinion survey for the 2035 MTP. The research involved a telephone survey of 1,050 residents and online survey 353 residents. The survey found that SACOG residents wanted a mix of highway/freeway and public transportation improvements and road maintenance. Specifically:

- Residents identified traffic congestion, inadequate public transportation, and limited highway/freeway capacity as the most serious problems.
- Asked what specific improvements they would like to see made, they wanted transit improvements, especially extending light rail to more areas and improved bus service, increased freeway capacity, and improved road conditions.
- The top three priorities, when presented a list of possible transportation system investments, were highways/freeways, road maintenance, and public transit (Davis, Hibbitts & Midghall Inc., SACOG Master Transportation Plan for 2035: Public Opinion Survey Research Report, February 2007).

Bus/carpool lanes provide increased highway capacity, and thus are supported by local residents.

Sacramento County is currently updating its General Plan. A Public Review Draft was released in November 2006 and included a Circulation Element. Under High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes, it states:

> High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes are restricted to carpools, vanpools, and transit vehicles. Most HOV lanes may be used by any vehicle carrying two or more people, although some are

restricted to vehicles with three or more passengers. HOV lanes are intended to increase the person-carrying capacity of the transportation system without requiring additional vehicle capacity. This is cost-effective for government, and improves air quality. Sacramento County supports the development of a regional network of HOV lanes as shown in the inset map on the Transportation Plan Map.

Sacramento County also supports the US 50 Corridor Mobility partnership, in which this project is included (www.50corridor.com).

Response E7a
Comment noted.

Response E8a
Please refer to Response W1j.

Response E9a
This project will not significantly change truck travel nor increase diesel VMT. The demand for truck travel is determined largely by the level of economic activity in a metropolitan area. The destinations that determine trucking activity can be widely disbursed, and do not necessarily coincide with the commute patterns and routes for automobile travel. Travel times for trucks are also different than commute times for automobiles, which puts most trucking outside the morning and evening peak traffic periods. Deregulation of the trucking industry and competitive pressure has also forced the trucking companies to carry more freight with fewer trucks and less miles of truck travel. The addition of bus/carpool lanes on US 50 between Sunrise and Watt Avenues will benefit trucks very little, as they are not allowed to use the bus/carpool lane (or inside lane) at any time during the week. Please refer to Response W1j.

Response E9b
The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) uses forecasted population growth patterns to predict future trips generated between origins and destinations. The SACMET Traffic Model is used by SACOG to predict these future generated trips. This data is then programmed into microsimulation traffic modeling software used by Caltrans. This software analyzes and predicts traffic flow patterns from the origins and destinations determined in the SACMET Model. The best, most efficient flow pattern, along with other criteria, determine the preferred alternative.

The SACMET model covers the entire 6-county SACOG area. This model is a mathematical tool that estimates the general travel choices people will make, based on the primary social, demographic and physical conditions that affect such choices. To develop the forecasting model, information on the characteristics of the transportation system is collected. Roadway and public-transit systems were studied to collect accurate technical descriptions of how these systems operate, and the conditions in which they operate. Data was also collected by conducting surveys of the region's residents to determine the types of trips being made and the factors that affect those trips. Using all this information, a mathematical model of travel behavior was developed, relating to the types of trips made, frequency of trips, length of trips, time of day that trips are made, and the mode of travel used for the trip. When these relationships are applied to the entire region, traffic volumes and public-transit ridership can be estimated for a base year, meaning the current year or a very recent year. Estimates are compared to actual data that are prepared from the base year, to determine the accuracy of the model. When the model is judged to be accurate within acceptable standards, it then can be used to forecast travel patterns for a future year, given some assumptions about the size of the population in that future year, the places where new housing and businesses are built, the size of the employment base in that year, and the transportation improvements expected to take place by that year (SACOG 2006 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Appendix J).

Response E10a
Please refer to Responses W1p.

Response E10b
Please refer to Responses W1p and W1gg.

Response E11a
Replacement sound walls (EB11 and EB12) are proposed along eastbound US 50 between Bradshaw Road and Mather Field Road. Please refer to Section 2.13.3 and Figures 2.1-1j, 1k, and 1l in the EIR/EA. Project construction is scheduled to begin in 2009 and end by 2012. The construction contractor makes the determination of when construction bid items are built including, but not limited to sound walls. This is normally made considering the most efficient use and availability of factors including but not limited to: materials, equipment, crew classifications, traffic staging, and weather. Sound walls are planned as abatement for long-term highway operations. For temporary construction noise, the contractor will be required to comply with all local noise ordinances.

Response E12a
A sound wall (WB8) is proposed along the westbound on-ramp at Zinfandel Drive. Please refer to Section 2.13.3 and Figure 2.1-1n in the EIR/EA.

Response E13a
Comment noted.

Response E14a
Comment noted.

Response E15a
Information regarding the William Alexander Leidesdorff, Jr., Memorial Highway is included in Section 1.5 of the Final EIR/EA. The project will not remove this designation. A sign showing the designation is located along eastbound US 50 east of Bradshaw Road. The sign may be temporarily removed during construction; the sign will be replaced once construction ends.

Response E16a
State Route 99 was already congested before the series of carpool lanes were added in the early 1990s. The congestion was and is caused by extreme growth in south Sacramento County. During the peak commute hours, the State Route 99 bus/carpool lanes accommodate substantially more people than adjoining regular lanes. Bus/carpool lanes can be very efficient transportation facilities as demonstrated by the lanes on State Route 99. The carpool lanes provide additional capacity for high-occupancy vehicles, such as carpools, buses, and vanpools. The carpool lanes enable the freeway to carry more people in fewer vehicles. The carpool lanes were and are the only viable alternative that meets federal air quality conformity standards, and represent the only approach used in the metropolitan areas to respond to growing traffic congestion, declining mobility levels, and air quality and other environmental concerns. Please refer to Responses W1p and E19a.

Response E17a
Comment noted.

Response E18a
The combined drainage systems (both storm water and sanitary sewer) within the City of Sacramento are problematic and especially vulnerable during large rainfall events. Overload of these systems are caused not only by the larger rainfall events, but also the leaf litter management systems employed by the local service provider, as well as the condition of the existing pipe network that is prone to considerable groundwater infiltration at substandard/damaged pipe joints. Unfortunately, the recommended improvements you have suggested are beyond the scope of this transportation

enhancement project. Caltrans is committed to working with the local agencies towards a solution to this on-going drainage related problem.

Direct discharge of storm water from State Right of Way to the combined storm water-sewer drainage systems occurs only within the western limits of the project (west of 24th street along the elevated section of the W-X portion of US 50). Historically, storm water discharge from this segment of Highway 50 drains directly to the City of Sacramento combined trunk main or lateral pipes found at the surface streets below the viaduct roadway sections. Compared to the total drainage area served by the combined system, the Caltrans roadway segments are small and have not warranted a dedicated storm water trunk main.

The nearest Caltrans dedicated pump station is located at the Oak Park Interchange (US 50/SR 99/SR 51). This dedicated storm water pump station, and three others within the project limits, were found undersized for the storm water conveyance requirements from the highway. Included in this project's scope is a contingency for modifications and improvements to these pump stations to bring them to current design requirements. There is no planned drainage improvement to build a dedicated storm water trunk main for this segment of highway improvement.

Response E19a

Bus/carpool lanes provide additional capacity for high-occupancy vehicles, such as carpools, buses, and vanpools. The carpool lane enables the freeway to carry more people in fewer vehicles. The carpool lanes are the only viable alternative that meets federal air quality conformity standards, and represent one approach being used in the metropolitan areas of our state to respond to growing traffic congestion, declining mobility levels, air quality and environmental concerns.

Caltrans regularly monitors the effectiveness of carpool lanes by conducting traffic counts and congestion studies on the carpool lane sections in Sacramento and other metropolitan areas of the State. District 3's annual High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes Status Report highlights the successful performance of the bus/carpool lanes. These studies show that the carpool lanes are effective in moving more persons per vehicle than a comparable mixed flow lane during the peak commute hour. For example, in 2006, the carpool lane on State Route 99 from Florin Road to 47th Avenue moved 3,419 persons in the peak AM commute hour, while the adjacent mixed flow lane carried 1,569 persons, or less than half of the carpool lane.

Traffic counts show carpool lanes in the Sacramento region all performed well, with significant growth in carpool lane usage on US-50 and I-80. For example, in 2006, the existing bus/carpool lanes on US 50 moved 2,109 persons during the AM peak commute hour, while the mixed-flow lanes carried 1,752 persons.

- Carpool lanes in the Sacramento area moved 23-44% of the people on the freeway, with only 13-27% of the total vehicle volume.

- Carpool users in the Sacramento area save an average of 10 minutes during the peak commute hour, when compared with users of mixed flow lanes.

- Transit buses regularly use the carpool lanes during the commute.

Please refer to Table 2.5-3 in the EIR/EA for a summary of time-savings on existing bus/carpool lanes in the Sacramento region.

Response E19b

Bus/carpool lanes are specifically intended to maintain free flow traffic in the lanes so that users of the lanes have a travel time advantage during peak traffic periods. Though fewer vehicles use the

bus/carpool lanes compared to mixed flow lanes, the bus/carpool lanes enable the movement of far more people per hour. Bus/carpool lanes are particularly effective and productive when used by commuter express buses.

Response E20a
As discussed in the Traffic Study and the EIR/EA, adding mixed flow lanes rather than a bus/carpool lane was not an acceptable alternative for the following reasons:

- Mixed flow does not promote carpooling or transit use.
- The mixed-flow alternative does not meet the purpose and need.
- The Traffic Report for the project indicated that the mixed-flow alternative would serve fewer persons and involve higher delays than Alternative 10D-3.
- The 2005/07 SACOG MTIP identified bus/carpool lane alternatives for US 50. The 2005/07 SACOG MTIP identified bus/carpool lane alternatives as having both superior air quality benefits and superior mobility benefits over mixed flow lanes.
- Bus/carpool lanes, not mixed-flow, are included for US 50 in SACOG's early 2035 MTP discussions.
- Adding a mixed flow lane at Sunrise Boulevard, where the existing bus/carpool lane exists, would create excessive violations, confusion, and unsafe lane changes.
- Because of air quality concerns, federal funding is not available for mixed flow lanes.
- The project is an important part of the larger existing and planned bus/carpool network proposed for the Sacramento region. Mixed-flow lanes are not part of this network.

If projections indicate that two-person carpools will congest the bus/carpool lane for a sustained period of time, then -person carpools are considered. Caltrans, along with the local transportation commissions and regional transportation planning agencies, decide if traffic conditions on a particular bus/carpool facility merit consideration for an increase in occupancy requirement.

Public agencies in El Dorado County are sponsoring projects to extend bus/carpool lanes farther to the east towards Placerville.

Response E21a
Comment noted.

Response E22a
Comment noted. Section 2.2 of the EIR/EA discusses the ways in which the proposed project could foster population growth by improving accessibility. By reducing commute times, the project would make communities in eastern Sacramento County and western El Dorado County more attractive to development. However, the analysis concludes that growth planned in the communities of eastern Sacramento County and western El Dorado County far exceed the additional capacity that the proposed bus/carpool lanes would provide to commuters. While the proposed project would support planned development and the trend toward development of Sacramento's eastern suburbs, the project cannot be said to remove a barrier to development on the US 50 corridor, since this development is already planned and, in many cases, constructed or being constructed.

Also, please refer to Responses W1j and W1p.

Response E23a
It is typical Caltrans District 3 traffic policy to end the microsimulation model studies at ramp termini. During project meetings in 2003, the Project Development Team determined that the model should extend up to the first intersection north and south of the highway. As a result, all local street connections at freeway off-ramps were analyzed at the off-ramp termini, as well as along the local street up to the first intersection. Parallel routes within the project limits, such as W and X Streets, were also analyzed. Please refer to Response W1j.

Response E23b
Please refer to Response W1j.

Response E23c
The Federal Clean Air Act requires that transportation plans, programs, and projects approved by a Metropolitan Planning Organization conform to the SIP. The Metropolitan Planning Organization for Sacramento County is SACOG. Demonstrating a project's conformity with the SIP involves inclusion of the project in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) by SACOG. Demonstrating a project's conformity with the SIP also involves determining that the project would not result in a violation of the carbon monoxide (CO) air quality standard. The proposed project is included in the approved MTP and (MTIP for Sacramento County. Before adopting the MTP and MTIP, Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) performed a quantitative analysis to determine if implementation of the set of projects would result in violations of the ozone and PM_{10} air quality standard. Based on this analysis, SACOG concluded that implementing the set of projects included in the MTP and MTIP would not result in a violation of the ozone standard. Please access www.sacog.org for information on the MTP and MTIP.

Response E23d
Please refer to Response W1b.

Response E23e
Regarding the EIR/EA's analysis of growth inducement, see Responses E22a, W1j, and W1p. Additionally, Caltrans acknowledges the reference to Robert Cervero's "Road Expansion, Urban Growth and Induced Travel, A Path Analysis." This paper compiles information on Caltrans highway improvements from 1980 to 1994 and compares it to US Census information on building activities. The paper identifies a correlation between highway investments, improved travel speeds, and intensification of development near the improvement, with development lagging behind freeway improvements by several years. In the case of the proposed project, however, the development is already occurring within the US 50 corridor (see EIR/EA Section 2.2.2.1) or is anticipated within the next 20 years at levels more than sufficient to overwhelm the capacity supplied by the proposed project.

It is interesting to note that the paper includes the following conclusion:

> "The problems people associate with roads – congestion, air pollution, and the like – are not the fault of the road investments *per se*. These problems stem mainly from the unborne externalities from the *use* of roads, new and old alike. They also stem from the absence of thoughtful and integrated land-use planning and growth management around new interchanges and along new corridors."

As has been noted, the proposed project is included in SACOG's Preferred Blueprint Scenario for regional development – presumably the kind of thoughtful and integrated land-use planning and growth management effort referred to in the paper.

Response E23f
Under CEQA, an EIR is not required to consider every conceivable alternative to a project; rather, only the alternatives that meet the project objectives (purpose and need), are feasible, and avoid or substantially reduce at least one of the significant environmental effects (CEQA Guidelines, Sec. 15126.6(f)). CEQA also notes that alternatives may be eliminated from detailed consideration in an EIR if they fail to meet most of the basic project objectives and are infeasible (CEQA Guidelines 15126.6(c)).

NEPA does not require that all possible alternatives be considered, rather that reasonable range of alternatives be presented. NEPA requires that an agency consider "reasonable" alternatives which

accomplish the agency's objectives, i.e. satisfy the criteria set forth in the statement of purpose and need. CEQA defines reasonable alternatives as those that are practical or feasible from the technical and economic standpoint.

As described in Section 1.6 of the EIR/EA, 25 alternatives were considered. As a result of various concerns, including community concerns, environmental effects, design considerations, meeting project objectives, and cost, two build alternatives (Alternative 10D-1 and 10D-3), along with the No-Build alternative, were carried forward as project alternatives. These two build alternatives met the project's purpose and need, were feasible, and avoided significant environmental effects.

Response E24a
The additional capacity that bus/carpool lanes provide improves the operation of US 50 for all drivers, not just carpools. Please refer to Response E19a.

Response E24b
Please refer to pages 9 and 10 of the Safety Section in the Traffic Report. On congested freeways, safety is always a major concern, with numerous lane changing in all lanes throughout the commute period. In regards to speed differential between the bus/carpool lanes and the adjacent mixed flow lanes, studies have shown no significant difference in safety between freeways with contiguous carpool lanes (such as those in Sacramento) and those without carpool lanes. The amount of congestion is the controlling factor in the accident experienced on California's freeways. The more congestion exists, the higher the accident rate. Carpool lanes are added to the freeway, thus creating more capacity and less congestion. The contiguous carpool lanes in Sacramento allow lane changing anywhere along the section, thus allowing more distance to make safe lane changes.

In 2006, Fehr & Peers conducted a study of accident rates before and after bus/carpool lanes were constructed on US-50 and I-80 in the Sacramento area. The study showed no notable increase in the number of accidents related to the bus/carpool lane, such as rear-end or sideswipe crashes in the bus/carpool lane (Fehr & Peers. Continuous HOV Lane Safety Review. November 13, 2006).

Response E24c
As stated in the EIR/EA, the preferred alternative, Alternative 10D-3, with proposed avoidance, minimization and mitigation measures, would not have any adverse impacts. The No-Build alternative would not implement any of the improvements involved in the project, meet the need and purpose of the project since it does not address mobility or congestion, or give commuters incentive to use buses or carpools during peak commute periods.

Response E24d
The bus/carpool lane does not discriminate against any commuters; it does differentiate the type of vehicle. The bus/carpool lane would be available for carpools (2 or more per vehicle), vanpools, and transit during the peak morning and evening commute hours. It would be available for all types of vehicles outside of the peak periods.

Response E24e
Comment noted. Please see Section 1.6.2.3 of the EIR/EA for a discussion to why mixed flow, or multipurpose, lanes were eliminated as an alternative.

Response E24f
Bus/carpool lanes are a component of an integrated multimodal system that provides a variety of transportation mode choices. Bus/carpool lanes have consistently demonstrated their utility in enabling the movement of more people in fewer vehicles, at higher travel speeds than occurs in adjacent regular freeway lanes. Projects to expand other aspects of the freeway system in the Sacramento region are beyond the scope of this project. Bus/carpool lanes are planned for I-80.

Response E24g
Comment noted. The Douglas/I-80 Interchange Improvement Project was a coordinated effort by the City of Roseville, Caltrans, and the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency (PCTPA). Please contact the City of Roseville (916-774-5201) for information regarding this project.

Response E25a
Comment noted.

Response E26a
Please refer to Responses L5dd, L12h, and L17a.

Response E26b
Please refer to Response E26a.

Response E26c
Section 2.12 of the EIR/EA has been revised to discuss historical exceedences of the state ambient air quality standard and to state that the Branch Center Road Air Quality Monitoring Station is outside the microscale region. As stated in Section 2.12 in relation to the no-build alternative, the project will not substantially increase diesel vehicle miles of travel (DVMT) and is anticipated to relieve future traffic congestion and improve level of service; therefore, increased PM10 emissions are not anticipated. In addition, on April 26, 2007, the project was deemed by the SACOG Regional Planning Partnership Committee "Not A Project of Air Quality Concern (NAPOAQC)" regarding PM_{10} for transportation projects planned in the Federal PM_{10} non-attainment area within SACOG's jurisdiction. Also, please refer to Responses E23c and L5f.

Response E26d
Please refer to Responses E26a and L2c.

Response E26e
Please refer to Response E26a.

Response E26f
A section regarding greenhouse gases has been added to the EIR/EA (see Section 2.12.4).

Response E26g
Section 3.3 of the EIR/EA describes the mitigation measures for significant impacts under CEQA. Discussion of avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures is included under the appropriate topic headings in Chapter 2 of the EIR/EA.

Letter Comments

Response L1a
Comment noted.

Response L1b
Comment noted.

Response L2a
Please refer to Response E23c.

Response L2b
The US 50 bus/carpool lanes are intended to serve both carpools and buses including express commuter buses. By providing bus/carpool lanes, transit agencies can use those lanes to transport people more quickly and efficiently and thus make transit a more attractive travel mode.

Response L2c
Caltrans understands your concerns. However, the project is not considered a "project of air quality concern" for $PM_{2.5}$ because the capacity change with the bus/carpool lane will have little effect on diesel truck traffic, which is the primary source of $PM_{2.5}$ and toxic air contaminants from a typical freeway.

Response L2d
The proposed project will help to achieve regional emission reductions that are identified in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan related to criteria and toxic pollutants. Please note that long-term health monitoring studies currently are not an acceptable use of project-level highway funds. The agency responsible for long-term air quality planning and health monitoring is the Air District

Response L3a
As described in Section 2.8, there are no floodplain impacts associated with Alternative 10D-3.

Response L4a
Comment noted.

Response L5a
Caltrans believes that the information provided in the EIR/EA and the accompanying technical studies is current, accurate and sufficient, and supports the conclusion that the project, with the avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures incorporated, does not significantly or adversely affect the environment. Please refer to various responses in this section that address your specific concerns. Please refer to Responses L5b regarding community enhancements and Responses L5q through L5aa regarding noise issues.

Response L5b
Appendix K of the EIR/EA includes correspondence between the City of Sacramento, City of Rancho Cordova, Sacramento County, and Caltrans regarding community enhancements.

One of the conditions to receive funding for community enhancements (as explained during the April 4, 2006 Sacramento City Council meeting) was that up to $15 million budgeted for enhancements as a result of a percentage of capital construction costs and that amount was to be divided between the three jurisdictions based on the proportional length of the selected preferred alternative. Alternative 10D-3 was selected as the preferred alternative. This alternative does not extend into the City of Sacramento, and as a result, the City no longer qualifies for community enhancement funds due to this project. As a result, the estimated capital construction cost for Alternative 10D-3 is approximately $120 million. Caltrans is committed to provide funding for community enhancements within the project limits

up to 10% of the capital construction cost (up to approximately $12 million - about $4 million within county limits and $8 million within the Rancho Cordova city limits).

Section 1.7, Community Enhancements, in the EIR/EA has been revised to include a discussion of community enhancements in the City of Rancho Cordova and Sacramento County.

Response L5c
Please refer to Response L5d.

Response L5d
A stated purpose of this project to "identify specific strategies and projects to improve the adjacent street system so as to enhance neighborhood livability" is met via the Community Enhancements funding that Caltrans is providing to local jurisdictions along US 50 based on the proportional length of the project within each jurisdiction. Each jurisdiction has the discretion to choose how to spend the money. All the money is available to improve the adjacent street system. However, each jurisdiction may decide whether to spend the funds on that or other transportation-related projects. Please refer to Responses L5b, L5f, L5j, L5k, and L5ll.

Response L5e
As noted in the EIR/EA, the proposed project is not expected to have a substantial impact on regional land use patterns or growth rates (Section 2.2). As noted in Response W1j, the addition of bus/carpool lanes would not cause an increase in overall daily VMT. Bus/carpool lanes would add capacity, resulting in an increase in VMT during the peak commute periods only. However, the overall total VMT for the corridor would remain unchanged, as it is a function of land use and population growth. Land use decisions made by local jurisdictions in the region control VMT.

Alternatives that would have created new on- and off-ramps to US 50 in downtown Sacramento were considered infeasible prior to the preparation of the draft environmental document. With neither new access points to the City's neighborhoods nor a substantial increase anticipated in vehicles using City streets compared to conditions without the project, there is no reason to anticipate either direct or indirect impacts to City streets or neighborhoods.

Cumulative impacts are discussed in Section 2.18 of the EIR/EA and in Responses L16e and L16g.

Alternative 10D-3, with project limits between Sunrise Boulevard and Watt Avenue, has been selected as the preferred alternative. Alternative 10D-3 does not extend into the City of Sacramento.

Response L5f
Caltrans' analysis of the project's indirect effects on neighborhoods adjacent to US 50 included an assessment of the project's impacts on community cohesion, property values, circulation and access, parking supply, bicycle and pedestrian accessibility, and visual quality. Alternatives 6B and 7B, which were studied in the environmental technical reports, were anticipated to have community impacts of this nature. These alternatives had proposed additional on- and off-ramps in the US 50 median. Alternative 10D-3 does not propose new access points to the City's street system. The proposed project, by improving the freeway's person-moving capacity, is expected to help divert vehicles from local streets. Alternative 10D-3 is outside the City of Sacramento's limits, and would not affect City neighborhoods adjacent to the freeway.

The example provided in the comment is of an impact on neighborhoods resulting from increased commuter traffic on local streets. The Traffic Study prepared for this project does not suggest that commuters would be more likely to divert to local streets as a result of the project; the capacity improvement provided by a bus/carpool lane would tend to attract vehicles to the freeway, compared to conditions without the project. Please refer to Response W1j and L5k.

Response L5g
A Community Impacts Assessment was prepared for this project. This assessment studied the project's potential indirect effects on neighborhoods. Please refer to Section 2.3 of the EIR/EA and Response L5f. No adverse impacts are anticipated under Alternative 10D-3.

Response L5h
Comment noted. Caltrans is not aware of any relevant information that has not been included in the environmental document.

Response L5i
All local street connections at freeway off-ramps were analyzed at the off-ramp termini, as well as, along the local street up to the first intersection. Parallel routes within the project limits, such as W and X Streets, were also analyzed. Section 1.10 of the EIR/EA includes the City's opposition to the project. Alternative 10D-3, which does not extend into the City of Sacramento, is the preferred alternative. Please also refer to Responses E9b and L5f.

Response L5j
Folsom Boulevard was not included in the network because of the large amount of additional data collection and calibration that would have been required. This extreme level of analysis on local street systems is not normally provided in Caltrans freeway traffic models and has not been provided in the past. The diversion discussed in the Traffic Report was expected and discussed to occur anywhere in the entire local street system, and it is not practical for Caltrans to model the entire local street system. Please refer to Responses E9b and L5pp for a description of the traffic model used by Caltrans to generate the traffic information presented in the EIR/EA. Alternative 10D-3, the preferred alternative, does not extend into the City of Sacramento and does not affect the intersections mentioned in the comment.

Response L5k
The study in question is the Traffic Operations Report included in the 1997 Project Study Report (PSR) for the downtown Sacramento to Mayhew segment of the project. The PSR is an engineering report that identifies the transportation problem (purpose and need), alternatives to be studied, key issues that must be investigated, scope, schedule, and estimated cost of a project. The Traffic Operations Report included the following table that shows reduction in traffic levels and congestion on parallel arterial roadways. The table is included here:

Roadway	**Segment**		**Peak Hour, Peak Direction Traffic Volume Percentage Change**	
	From	**To**	**AM Peak Hour**	**PM Peak Hour**
Folsom Blvd.	Bradshaw Rd.	Mayhew Rd.	-5%	-2%
	Mayhew Rd.	La Rivera Dr.	-8%	-1%
	La Rivera Dr.	Watt Ave.	-5%	0%
	Florin Perkins Rd.	Jackson Hwy.	-16%	2%
	Hornet Dr.	65th St.	-5%	-2%
	48th Street	39th St.	-7%	-3%
Broadway	Stockton Blvd.	59th St.	-5%	0%
Jackson Highway	Bradshaw Rd.	Mayhew Rd.	-3%	0%
	Watt Ave.	Florin Perkins Rd.	-3%	-5%

A copy of the full study is available from Caltrans District 3 office in Sacramento.

Response L5l
Please refer to Response L5j.

Response L5m

Forecast years, as with forecast volumes, provide an estimate of future traffic conditions. The traffic studies were based on the most recent forecast year information available at the time. Extending the forecast year from 2030 to 2035 would not yield a significant increase due to saturation during the peak period in the outlying years (saturation is 2,000 vehicles per hour [VPH] per lane; 6 lanes = 12,000 VPH). An example of the saturation flow rate for this facility, (the difference between 2030 and 2034 volumes based on a 1% growth factor) is as follows:

- 2030 forecast: 12,500 VPH
- 2034 forecast: 13,000 VPH

In both forecast years volumes exceed capacity, so there is no change in the conclusion. Also, the design of the preferred project alternative will not change as a result of the above. It's important to note that the bus/carpool project is designed to move more people quicker and increasing person miles traveled not vehicle miles traveled.

Forecasts were developed from trip tables provided from SACOG that included socioeconomic data (SED) for the years 2005, 2008, 2010, 2020, 2025, and 2027. A 5-year growth rate between 2020 and 2025 was developed and applied to 2025 SED to create the 2030 SED. Network improvements were developed from the SACOG MTP to match the respective forecasts years 2010 and 2020. Year 2030 contains 2027 network improvements. The most recent and current data was used in the 2030 model.

Response L5n

Congestion would be reduced under Alternative 10D-3. Due to the high volume of unmet demand (congestion) that currently exists in the corridor, and the high rate of growth that is forecasted for the future, LOS values are projected to remain low. However, the analysis shows that the no-build alternative would result in even higher densities, lower speeds, and greater congestion.

Regarding the operating speeds, the speeds modeled in micro-simulation were reported between interchanges (Attachment A-1 to A-4 in the traffic study). The comment suggests that the build alternatives will degrade the LOS and lower speeds. The comment states that the highest speed was 53 mph and compares that speed with the lowest speed near downtown for all build alternatives. However, this is not an accurate comparison.

A more accurate comparison would be to compare the average speeds between Alternative 10D-3 and the No-Build Alternative (shown below). Speeds were collected between Sunrise Boulevard and Watt Avenue for both alternatives. The four sections between interchanges were averaged between Sunrise Boulevard and Watt Avenue.

The table shows that the build alternative results in higher speeds and improved LOS over the no-build alternative.

Average Speed, West Bound AM Sunrise Blvd. to Watt Ave. (from Attachment 2 of the Traffic Study)

Alternative	**Existing- 2004**	**2010**	**2020**	**2030**
No Build	38 mph	35 mph	31 mph	27 mph
Alt. 10D-3 (Sunrise to Watt)		41 mph	37 mph	34 mph

Response L5o

The traffic modeling tool used by Caltrans to predict futures speeds and volumes is as accurate as the industry can provide. Experience has shown that on other bus/carpool projects on US 50 and elsewhere, congestion decreases and speeds increase when the bus/carpool lanes are opened to traffic. This occurs for all lanes throughout the bus/carpool segment. The model correctly shows this benefit of adding capacity. In fact, when capacity is added anywhere, speeds will increase in all lanes.

Please refer to Tables 2.5-3 and 2.5-4 for summaries of time savings on existing bus/carpool lanes in the Sacramento region. Also, please refer to Responses E9b and L5pp for a description of the traffic model used by Caltrans to generate the traffic information presented in the EIR/EA.

Response L5p
Please refer to Response E24b.

Response L5q
Caltrans as the lead agency is responsible for determining the impact criteria under CEQA. The Caltrans Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol states that a traffic noise impact may be considered significant under CEQA if the project is predicted to result in a substantial increase in traffic noise (CaTNAP Section 3.1). Caltrans defines a substantial increase as an increase of 12 dBA from the existing condition to the proposed design-year condition. The predicted noise level increases for this project do not meet this threshold, and therefore traffic noise impacts of the proposed project are less than significant under CEQA.

Response L5r
The project includes the use of open graded asphalt concrete (OGAC), which will reduce traffic noise levels by 4-6 dBA below the projected project levels. The project will increase noise levels by 1-2 dBA over existing levels, with the net result of an overall reduction in traffic noise on US 50 of 3-4 dBA.

Response L5s
Caltrans does not have to consider local municipality guidelines if the work is contained within Caltrans right-of-way. No new right of way will be acquired within the City of Sacramento and therefore only Caltrans standards apply. Alternative 10D-3, the preferred alternative, does not extend into the City of Sacramento.

Response L5t
Predicted future noise levels were calculated based on the proposed alignment of US 50, including all shifts in the alignments. Alternative 10D-1 is no longer being considered; Alternative 10D-3 is the preferred alternative.

Response L5u
Traffic noise impacts were modeled with speeds taken into consideration. Traffic speeds for each lane were input into the noise model. As a result, predicted noise levels take into account varying speeds across the lanes of US 50.

Response L5v
Please refer to Response L5q regarding noise impact significance under CEQA. All potential abatement measures were proposed. Based on the studies, Caltrans intends to incorporate noise abatement measures in the form of barriers (sound walls) at the various locations, with respective lengths and average heights discussed in the EIR/EA. If the project changes substantially during final design, noise barriers might not be provided. The final decision on the noise barriers will be made after completion of the public involvement process during the final project design process. The preferred alternative, Alt. 10D-3, does not extend into the City of Sacramento. As a result, abatement measures within the City are not included as part of this project.

Response L5w
Please refer to Response L5v.

Response L5x
Please refer to Response L5v.

Response L5y
Please refer to Response L5v.

Response L5z
Comment noted. Alternative 10D-3, which does not extend into the City of Sacramento, is the preferred alternative.

Response L5aa
Caltrans held several meetings with the Elmhurst Neighborhood Association, including one with the Director of Transportation Will Kempton, along with the two workshops to keep the neighborhood informed with the project and all components, including sound walls. The statement quoted in the letter refers to the final reasonableness determination, which is one of many factors to be considered whether a sound wall is first considered feasible and being analyzed for inclusion into the project. The views of the community were considered and even though the sound wall was not feasible (based on criteria in Caltrans Highway Traffic Noise Analysis and Abatement Policy and Guidance - June 1995) and therefore not eligible for federal reimbursement, it was considered as a community enhancement. However, since Alternative 10D-3 is the preferred alternative, no improvements west of Watt Avenue are being considered.

Response L5bb
The project will accommodate express services from points beyond Sunrise Blvd. Double tracking light rail, while supported by Caltrans, does not provide the same level of mobility options as bus/carpool lanes in the US 50 corridor. Please refer to Response E23f.

Response L5cc
Both the bus/carpool project and light rail extensions and improvements (including finishing double-tracking all existing light rail lines for express service) are included in the MTP. Please refer to Responses E23f and L5bb.

Response L5dd
Caltrans calculated NOx emissions for SACOG as part of its application for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program funding. The California Air Resources Board supplied the calculation methodology. The calculations showed a total reduction in NOx emissions under Alternative 10D-3 of approximately 52,300 grams per day.

Response L5ee
Please refer to Responses E23c and L5dd.

Response L5ff
Caltrans studies of existing carpool lanes in the Sacramento Area have found that these lanes do encourage people to carpool. Please refer to Response E19a.

Response L5gg
Please refer to Response W1j.

Response L5hh
The EIR/EA and the Community Impact Assessment prepared for this project analyzed the project's potential to induce growth. Please refer to Responses W1j, E22a, and E23a.

Response L5ii
The comment correctly states that solo drivers in hybrid vehicles would be allowed in the bus/carpool lane and that hybrid vehicles will help reduce emissions and gasoline usage. The comment suggests that a different land use outcome might be expected based on the number of people in vehicles but it

must be made clear that local jurisdictions dictate land use. Carpooling, unlike transit, is not associated with a distinct land use pattern.

Response L5jj
Please refer to Response W1b.

Response L5kk
Please refer to Response W1b.

Response L5ll
As stated in the beginning of Appendix A of the EIR/EA (CEQA Checklist), the supporting documentation of all CEQA checklist determinations was provided in Chapter 2 of the EIR/EA. Documentation of "No Impact" determinations was provided at the beginning of Chapter 2. Discussion of all impacts, avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are included under the appropriate topic headings in Chapter 2.

Response L5mm
Chapter 3 of the EIR/EA describes the significant impacts under CEQA and mitigation measures proposed to reduce the impacts to below significance.

Response L5nn
It is not correct to say that the project only provides six years of congestion relief. Tables A-1 through A-4 in the Traffic Report show greater throughput for Alternative 10D-3 through the year 2030, when compared with the no-build alternative. Even once the freeway reaches capacity, Alternative 10D-3 provides one additional bus/carpool lane (over the no-build) to move more people through the US 50 corridor between Sunrise Boulevard and Watt Avenue. In addition, Table 2.5-2 in the EIR/EA shows a modeled average travel time for Alternative 10D-3 that is less than the no-build alternative through the year 2030. Tables 2.5-4 and 2.5-5 are based on existing travel time data (using tachometer runs) and extrapolating the data through the year 2010. These tables show the time savings potential of the bus/carpool lane using actual tachometer run data.

Response L5oo
Commuter bus service along US 50 is an important means of improving mobility within the corridor both in concept and reality. Currently, a total of 43 express bus trips use US 50 each day.

Response L5pp
The data used was updated by SACOG to reflect year 2005 conditions and is consistent with the MTP, it is not 10 year old modeling data. Upon Caltrans request, SACOG staff updated employment and population (socio-economic data) for the 2005 base year and the horizon year 2030, and in turn the 2005 SACMET demand model was used to model the Caltrans project specific project alternatives. The demand model was the basis for the Paramics sub- model development also used for this project. Operational project specific alternatives, such as auxiliary lanes, should be modeled in the Paramics simulation model because the demand model does not accurately capture the benefits of operational improvements.

Since 1998, Paramics has become one of the leading microscopic simulation packages in the world. Quadstone Limited in Scotland developed Paramics. The commercial version of the Paramics software is currently being used by over 500 users in over 40 countries worldwide. Users include various government agencies, traffic consultants, and transportation researchers.

The Paramics microsimulation model is used to compare alternatives. Caltrans uses Paramics, which is a proven and accurate microsimulation traffic model, to compare the project to other alternatives, e.g. mixed flow lanes, lane conversion, and HOT lanes. Paramics has been used effectively in the past on

the US 50 and I-80 corridors in the Sacramento area, as well as in the southern Caltrans Districts in the State.

Response L6a
Comment noted.

Response L7a
US 50 traffic counts in the westbound direction decrease after Watt Avenue for the PM commute. More drivers exit the freeway than enter the freeway in the westbound direction. Traffic counts in the westbound direction increase after Watt Avenue for the AM commute. More drivers enter the freeway headed into downtown.

The traffic model showed that a bus/carpool lane drop can occur in the AM and the PM at Watt Avenue, because the high off-ramp traffic volumes at Watt Avenue reduce the bottlenecking impact caused by the dropped bus/carpool lane, even for the AM commute. Large traffic volumes exiting Watt Avenue would work in conjunction with a bus/carpool lane drop at that location.

Alternative 10D-3 meets the independent utility/logical termini criteria of FHWA.

Logical termini are defined as (1) rational end points for a transportation improvement, and (2) rational end points for a review of the environmental impacts. Independent utility, or independent significance, is defined as being a usable and reasonable expenditure even if no additional transportation improvements in the area are made. The project has two rational end points, Watt Avenue and Sunrise Boulevard and will function independent of other transportation projects. Watt Avenue is a major interchange with high traffic volumes; Sunrise Boulevard is the end/start of the existing bus/carpool lane into El Dorado County.

Response L7b
The community enhancement section of the EIR/EA (Section 1.7) has been revised. Please refer to Responses L5b and L5d.

Response L7c
Cumulative impacts are addressed adequately; see Chapter 2.18 of the EIR/EA.

Response L7d
Please refer to Responses W1j and E23c.

Response L7e
The project would not alter traffic patterns throughout central Sacramento. The projects effects would be limited to the freeway corridor, just as past bus/carpool lane projects have been limited to their corridors. The City of Rancho Cordova and the City of Roseville did not develop altered traffic patterns due to bus/carpool lane construction on US 50 and I-80 in the past. Traffic signal connections with the local streets would control the flow rate of traffic onto the city streets from the project. By joint agreement, the signal timing at the ramp intersections in downtown Sacramento are controlled by the City. Alternative 10D-3, which does not extend into the City of Sacramento, is the preferred alternative. Please refer to Responses W1j and E9b.

Response L7f
Projected increases in traffic volumes were provided in Table 3 of the Traffic Study and are include below.

Future 4-hour Forecast Demand Volumes

AM 4-Hour

Eastbound From	To	2004 MF	2010 MF	2020 MF	2030 MF	2010 HOV	2020 HOV	2030 HOV	2010 NB	2020 NB	2030 NB
16th St	**19th St**	22899	29865	33373	35318	30178	34043	35707	29565	32748	34607
Howe Ave	**Watt Ave**	16856	18307	21000	23748	18189	20456	23139	17514	19584	21954
Sunrise Blvd.	**Hazel Ave**	13049	13503	15854	19201	13469	14687	19069	13331	14029	18963

Westbound From	To	2004 MF	2010 MF	2020 MF	2030 MF	2010 HOV	2020 HOV	2030 HOV	2010 NB	2020 NB	2030 NB
16th St	**19th St**	23907	25179	28909	32152	25349	28963	32745	24645	29297	30953
Howe Ave	**Watt Ave**	26059	29071	31610	36746	29024	30886	35946	27962	29995	33833
Sunrise Blvd	**Hazel Ave**	15753	17427	18233	25448	17295	20323	25178	17051	20296	24586

PM 4-Hour

Eastbound From	To	2004 MF	2010 MF	2020 MF	2030 MF	2010 HOV	2020 HOV	2030 HOV	2010 NB	2020 NB	2030 NB
16th St	**19th St**	27189	29170	33264	37052	30268	34331	38182	28683	32488	36158
Howe Ave	**Watt Ave**	26416	28130	31676	37616	27961	30758	35524	26553	29471	32685
Sunrise Blvd	**Hazel Ave**	20299	21337	23767	31033	21517	25984	31018	21138	25060	30057

Westbound From	To	2004 MF	2010 MF	2020 MF	2030 MF	2010 HOV	2020 HOV	2030 HOV	2010 NB	2020 NB	2030 NB
16th St	**19th St**	25932	27929	31262	34158	28788	32187	35250	27336	30544	33122
Howe Ave	**Watt Ave**	22483	24942	28650	30978	24938	28283	30586	23788	26880	28634
Sunrise Blvd	**Hazel Ave**	13042	14972	16746	21921	13823	15382	21381	13549	15196	21519

MF – Mixed flow.
HOV – High Occupancy Vehicle.
NB – No build.

Response L7g

All local street connections at freeway off-ramps were analyzed at the off-ramp termini, as well as along the local street up to the first intersection. Parallel routes within the project limits, such as W and X Streets, were also analyzed. Please refer to Response W1j.

Response L7h

Parking demand studies are not normally required for Caltrans projects. These are normally done for commercial building projects; for example, City approved, high rise commercial properties that attract thousands of commuters to downtown Sacramento. Therefore, parking demand will increase with or without this project. Alternative 10D-3 enables US 50 from Sunrise Boulevard and Watt Avenue to carry more people in fewer vehicles. Induced parking is not anticipated. Please refer to Responses W1cc and E19a.

Response L7i

Please refer to Responses W1j and E23c.

Response L7j

Please refer to Response W1b.

Response L7k

Major growth along the US 50 corridor is already approved and/or planned by the local jurisdictions, regardless whether this project is constructed. Caltrans follows specific guidelines for analyzing the growth inducement potential for transportation projects (a copy of the guidelines can be obtained at www.dot.ca.gov/ser/Growth-related_IndirectImpactAnalysis/gri_guidance_content.htm). Please refer to Responses W1j, E22a, and E23e.

Response L7l
The project is being designed to meet nationally recognized highway design standards and complies with current safety practices. The other bus/carpool lanes in the Sacramento region are operating with expected safety standards.

Please refer to pages 9 and 10 of the Safety Section in the Traffic Report. The amount of congestion is the primary factor in the accident experience on California's freeways. The more congestion exists, the more accidents occur. Carpool lanes are added to the freeway to reduce congestion and improve safety over the no-build condition. Please refer to Response E24b.

Response L7m
Please refer to Responses E23f and L8a. As stated in the EIR/EA, both light rail extensions and bus/carpool lanes are needed to alleviate congestion. This project complies with the stated purpose and need.

Response L7n
Please refer to Responses W1p and L12l.

Response L8a
The project will accommodate express services from points beyond Sunrise Blvd. Double tracking light rail, while supported by Caltrans, does not provide the same level of mobility options as bus/carpool lanes in the US 50 corridor. The Sacramento Area Council of Governments stated that an extension of the light rail to Folsom and an extension of the bus/carpool lanes were both needed and programmed separate projects for each mode.

The proposed bus/carpool lanes will be available to transit vehicles and it is the desire of Caltrans that commute express buses use the bus/carpool lanes to the greatest extent possible. However, Caltrans does not have the authority to operate such transit services nor add a second set of tracks to the Folsom Light Rail line.

Response L8b
All local street connections at freeway off-ramps were analyzed at the off-ramp termini, as well as, along the local street up to the first intersection. Parallel routes within the project limits, such as W and X Streets, were also analyzed. Alternative 10D-3, which does not extend into the areas noted in the comment, is the preferred alternative.

Alternative 10D-3 includes facilities that benefit bikes and pedestrians, including the reconstruction of the pedestrian over-crossings at Mayhew Road POC and White Rock Community Park POC. Please refer to Section 2.5.2 of the EIR/EA.

Sacramento County also requested pedestrian and bicycle improvements to the Bradshaw Interchange as part of their community enhancements (see Appendix K of the EIR/EA).

Response L8c
Please refer to Response L8b.

Response L8d
Please refer to Response L8b.

Response L8e
There were air receptors modeled near school sites. The results indicate that the freeway emission has no significant impact to school sites. However, air emissions at schools are closely related to automobiles arriving and parking at the school and parents dropping off and picking up non-driving students. Those emissions are not related to the freeway. Alternative 10D-3 has been selected as the preferred alternative.

Response L9a
Comment noted. Alternative 10D-3 has been selected as the preferred alternative.

Response L9b
The Caltrans Maintenance Yard does not have any outdoor areas of frequent human usage that would benefit from a lower noise level. According to Caltrans Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol Section 2.8.1, noise abatement is only considered where noise impacts are predicted and where frequent human use occurs and a lowered noise level would be of benefit.

Response L9c
Existing Barriers H, I, Q-1, Q-2, Q-3, Q-4 and J along with new barriers WB2, EB2, EB3, EB4, EB5, EB6 and EB7 were analyzed for Segment 2 of the proposed project. Please refer to Chapter 2.13 of the EIR/EA. However, since Alternative 10D-3 is the preferred alternative, no improvements west of Watt Avenue are being considered.

Response L9d
A sound wall from T Street to 39th Street was not considered in this area because there are no sensitive receivers that a potential sound wall would shield. Proposed sound wall WB2 stops east of 34th Street, and existing Barrier H begins west of 37th Street. Proposed sound wall WB2 would adequately shield the neighborhoods north of Highway 50 along 34th Street, reducing the predicted noise levels to below the Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC) of 67 dBA. Any extension of proposed sound wall WB2 would not further benefit these receivers, and there are no more sensitive receivers that would benefit from the extension either. However, since Alternative 10D-3 is the preferred alternative, no improvements west of Watt Avenue are being considered.

Response L9e
The reasonableness allowance was calculated in accordance with the Caltrans Traffic Analysis Protocol outlined in both the Protocol (Section 2.8.2) as well as the report (Section 7.5). Caltrans makes the final reasonableness determination. However, since Alternative 10D-3 is the preferred alternative, no improvements west of Watt Avenue are being considered.

Response L9f
Sound wall WB2 would reduce noise levels at residences north of Highway 50 along 34th Street to below the Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC) of 67 dBA. Noise levels at first and second-tier homes along 34th Street (as represented by receivers Site 10 and Site 11) are expected to decrease between 3 and 6 dBA with construction of the proposed barrier. Proposed sound wall EB-2A will provide no benefit to the Alhambra Triangle as it is intended to shield residents south of US 50. If an extension of sound wall WB-2 eastward is the intended comment, this would be limited in noise reduction benefit as shielding is currently present from industrial buildings. However, since Alternative 10D-3 is the preferred alternative, no improvements west of Watt Avenue are being considered.

Response L9g
Construction noise is regulated by Caltrans' standard specifications (section 7-1.01I, "Sound Control Requirements"), which state that noise levels generated during construction shall comply with applicable local, state, and federal regulations and that all equipment shall be fitted with adequate mufflers according to the manufacturer's specifications. Measures to reduce noise levels may include

advanced public notice, lowering of backup alarms, and using "noise curtains". However, since Alternative 10D-3 is the preferred alternative, no improvements west of Watt Avenue are being considered.

Response L9h
Caltrans is not required to consider local government noise policies or ordinances as long as work is conducted within Caltrans right-of-way. Please refer to Responses L5s and L9g.

Response L9i
Vibration due to construction is a temporary impact. Construction induced vibrations are normally within the range unlikely to cause architectural damage. Specific operations which may present a risk include pile driving and pavement breaking (crack and seal operations) within 25 ft of buildings. Since Alternative 10D-3 is the preferred alternative, no improvements or work west of Watt Avenue are being considered.

For your reference, the following website link contains the technical advisory on transportation related earthborn vibrations:
www.dot.ca.gov/hq/env/noise/pub/TRANSPORTATION_RELATED_EARTHBORNE_VIBRATIONS.pdf

Response L10a
Alternative 10D-3, which does not extend into the City of Sacramento, is the preferred alternative. Alternative 10D-3 will not affect the Land Park area.

Response L10b
All local street connections at freeway off-ramps were analyzed at the off-ramp termini, as well as, along the local street up to the first intersection. Parallel routes within the project limits, such as W and X Streets, were also analyzed. However, Alternative 10D-3, which does not extend into the areas noted in the comment, is the preferred alternative.

Response L10c
Please refer to Responses W1j and L8e.

Response L10d
Please refer to Response L8e.

Response L10e
Please refer to Response W1b.

Response L10f
Please refer to Responses W1j, E22a, E23e, and L7k.

Response L10g
EIR/EA Section 2.18 discusses the cumulative impacts associated with building bus/carpool lanes on I-5 and I-80.

Response L10h
Please refer to Responses E24b and L10a.

Response L10i
Please refer to Response E23f.

Response L11a
Comment noted.

Response L12a
Alternative 10D-3 would not affect bicycle traffic. The project does not realign existing ramp termini at local streets, and therefore is not expected to negatively affect bicyclists. Alternative 10D-3 also includes the reconstruction of the Manlove pedestrian over-crossing at Watt Avenue and White Rock pedestrian over-crossing. Please refer to Response L8b.

Response L12b
The Sacramento region promotes carpooling through programs funded and coordinated by the SACOG: 511 Travel Information, Transportation Management Associations, carpool matches, etc. Caltrans conducts annual carpool counts and so will be able to determine lane usage and vehicle occupancy. Data from occupancy counts on I-80 and State Route 99 show substantial growth in the number of carpool vehicles using the corridors after bus/carpool lanes were constructed. In addition, the carpool lane provides a reliable free-moving lane for vanpools and buses. Please refer to Responses Response W1p and E19a.

Response L12c
An evaluation of whether the project results in behavioral changes related to carpooling is interesting, but outside the scope of the environmental document. Bus/carpool lanes must meet minimum standards in order to continue to operate as a bus/carpool lane. Caltrans considers a bus/carpool lane successful when a minimum of 800 vehicles per hour per lane or 1800 persons per hour per lane is achieved during the peak hour within the first year of operation. If they become too congested, these lanes can be modified to a 3-person minimum. Please refer to Response E19a for data on the success of local bus/carpool lanes.

Response L12d
Please refer to Response E24b.

Response L12e
As stated in the 2005 HOT analysis conducted by Dowling Associates, Inc., the limited access points for the HOT lanes (necessary for toll collection and enforcement purposes) resulted in the diversion of many potential bus/carpool users of the HOT lanes to the mixed flow lanes. The resulting increase in congestion in the mixed flow lanes was a significant detriment, which could not be outweighed by the benefits recouped by allowing single occupant vehicles to pay a toll to access the HOT lanes. The HOT study was included as an appendix in the Traffic Study.

Please refer to Response E23f.

Response L12f
Please refer to Response L7a.

Response L12g
Please refer to Response W1b.

Response L12h
Caltrans performed an MSAT (mobile source air toxics) analysis using the MSAT spreadsheet developed by the University of California, Davis (http://aqp.engr.ucdavis.edu/Documents/UCD_MSAT_Report_12_28_2006.pdf). The method utilizes the California Air Resources Board's (CARB's) EMFAC2007 on-road emissions model, related MSAT data provided by CARB, and activity data provided by the project analyst. The results of the analysis are detailed below:

Summary of Project Level DPM and MSAT Emissions (grams/day)						
	Diesel PM	Benzene	1,3-Butadiene	Acetaldehyde	Acrolein	Formaldehyde
Base Year (Existing)	5691	11035	2253	2445	518	8402
Operational Year (No-Build)	4924	5705	1083	1359	249	4482
Operational Year (Build)	5011	5373	1033	1307	238	4299
RTP Horizon Year (No-Build)	2114	2434	419	460	99	1685
RTP Horizon Year (Build)	2207	2298	407	447	97	1637

Except for diesel PM, all 5 remaining compounds showed a reduction in emissions of Alternative 10D-3 over no-build for both the operational year (2012) and horizon year (2032). The difference in diesel PM is less than 5%. What is striking is the amount of emission reduction between existing year, 2012, and 2032. The USEPA has issued a number of regulations that will dramatically decrease MSATs through cleaner fuels and cleaner engines. According to an FHWA analysis, even if VMT increases by 64 percent, reductions of 57 percent to 87 percent in MSATs are projected from 2000 to 2020 (fhwa.dot.gov/environment/airtoxic/vmtmsat2020.htm).

As described in Section 2.6.4 of the EIR/EA, several measures are proposed regarding vegetation. For one, all removed trees and shrubs will be replaced. A landscape plan to provide appropriate screening of sound walls is also proposed. Appropriate landscape materials (trees, shrubs, and vines) should be determined based on the placement of the wall and available setbacks. Generally, trees require a 30-foot setback, shrubs need approximately 20 feet and vines can be planted and trained to grow up the wall. A combination of these plantings may be appropriate for this area.

Response L12i
Please refer to Response L5g.

Response L12j
Caltrans does not have authority to impose or enforce parking requirements. Local agencies develop and implement parking policies usually based on associated land use and transit availability.

Response L12k
The comment states that a gridlocked freeway would "be the same as no access at all" to developments in suburban areas. The experience of other metropolitan areas, such as the Bay Area, indicates that freeway congestion is not a very effective means of limiting suburban or exurban development. In the Bay Area, both vehicle miles traveled and vehicle hours of delay have increased. While the freeways are congested, suburban communities have continued to be attractive to commuters seeking affordable housing.

Please refer to Responses W1j, E22a, and E23e.

Response L12l
Bus/carpool lanes are efficient transportation system components. Less energy is consumed per person transported in multi-occupant vehicles as compared to single occupant vehicles.

Response L13a
Comment noted.

Response L14a
Traffic studies did not show any negative impact to public schools. This project could help reduce traffic on the local streets near public schools, because drivers would use the less congested freeway, rather than diverting to local streets near schools. In fact, under the no-build scenario, congestion on US 50 would worsen, and traffic on adjacent surface streets would increase.

Response L14b
Please refer to Response L8e.

Response L14c
Please refer to Response E23f. The No-Build alternative was analyzed in the EIR/EA, and found not to meet the need and purpose of the project, or give commuters incentive to use buses or carpools during peak commute periods.

Response L15a
The Manlove pedestrian overcrossing (POC) at Salmon Falls Park is being replaced to meet ADA standards. The POC provides a safe alternative to crossing US 50 at Watt Ave. The POC is also included in the Sacramento County Safe Routes to Transit Plan as a Class I pedestrian and bicycle facility. Moving the POC to the east would have more impacts to the residents and cost more to construct. Cordova Park and Recreation District considers Salmon Falls a residential park, and does not plan on changing this designation.

Response L16a
Please refer to Responses W1j and E1a.

Response L16b
Please refer to Response L5b and L5d.

Response L16c
Although not a requirement in bus/carpool lane projects, a lane conversion alternative was fully analyzed in the Traffic Report. The same percentage of bus/carpool vehicles was used for all alternatives for a given forecast year. Later forecast years resulted in a higher percent of bus/carpool vehicles. The traffic model showed that when an existing lane was converted to carpool lane, the existing mixed flow demand using that lane would be forced into the remaining mixed flow lanes, creating new congestion and reducing speeds significantly. The Bus/Carpool Lane Conversion Alternative was the poorest performing alternative and was rejected. Please refer to Response E23f for information regarding range of alternatives.

Response L16d
Please refer to Response W1j.

Response L16e
Cumulative traffic impacts within the project limits were analyzed in the traffic model for all alternatives in all design years in the Traffic Report. The Traffic Report study parameters used to compare alternatives included speed, volume, and unmet demand (congestion). These parameters identified all impacts to the system. Environmental impacts, such as air and noise, were studied in other sections of the EIR. The existing congestion on US 50 has developed over the last decade and will continue to develop, with or without this project. Please refer to Response W1j.

Response L16f
Caltrans disagrees that the data is insufficient. Caltrans believes that the information provided in the EIR/EA and the accompanying technical studies is current, accurate and sufficient, and supports the conclusion that the project, with the avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures incorporated, does not significantly or adversely affect the environment. Please refer to various responses in this section that address your specific concerns. Please refer to Response W1b regarding global climate warming. Please refer to Response W1j regarding VMT.

Response L16g

Tables 2.18-1 and 2.18-2 in the EIR/EA list the projects that were considered in the analysis of cumulative impacts. Additionally, EIR/EA Section 2.12.2.4 includes a summary of the findings of SACOG's regional air quality modeling. This modeling included the list of projects in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program and determined that these projects would not result in a violation of the ozone air quality standard. Ozone is the regional air quality pollutant most likely to be affected by transportation projects. Please refer to Response E23c.

Response L16h
Please refer to Response E23c.

Response L16i
Please refer to Response L5i. Alternative 10D-3 is the preferred alternative.

Response L16j
Please refer to Response L5i. Alternative 10D-3 is the preferred alternative.

Response L16k
Please refer to Response L5i. Alternative 10D-3 is the preferred alternative.

Response L16l
The project included all known transportation and development projects planned along the study corridor. Please refer to Table 2.18-1 in the EIR/EA. Alternative 10D-3 is the preferred alternative.

Response L16m
Please refer to Response L16c.

Response L16n
Please refer to Responses W1j, E23f, L5f, and L16c.

Response L16o
Please refer to Responses W1cc, E23f. L7h, L17b, and L16c.

Response L16p
Alternative 10D-3, which does not extend west of Watt Avenue, is the preferred alternative.

Response L16q
Please refer to Responses E26a, L2c, L8e, and L14a.

Response L16r
Please refer to Responses W1j, E22a, and E23e.

Response L16s
Please refer to Responses W1j, E22a, and E23e.

Response L16t
The appropriate sections of the EIR/EA (Sections 2.1.1.2 and 2.1.2.2) have been revised to include Regional Transit's Strategic Plan.

Response L16u
Caltrans does not anticipate having an adverse effect on transit ridership based on past trends and future anticipated congestion levels. The proposed project may affect commuters' tendency to consider one form of transit over another. Specifically, the bus/carpool lane would improve travel times, while light rail travel times would not improve. Also, a bus/carpool lane would be likely to spur additional investment in bus services by transit operators in the region, making the bus more attractive to

commuters. Generally, however, light rail riders take advantage either of the proximity of light rail stations to their origin (home) or destination (place of work, typically), or both. Costs of riding light rail are also lower, often, than for express bus service. It seems unlikely that the addition of bus/carpool lanes would result in transit riders diverting to carpools or single-occupancy vehicles (SOV) in order to take advantage of reduced travel times on the freeway. The advantages of transit (lower costs for vehicle fuel, maintenance, and parking) would be unaffected. Commuting in a carpool or SOV is already more efficient in terms of travel time and flexibility.

Please refer to Responses W1j, E23e, and L16t.

Response L16v
A section regarding greenhouse gases has been added to the EIR/EA (see Section 2.12.4). Please refer to Responses E9b and L17c.

Response L17a
As stated in the EIR/EA, the contractor is required to comply with all pertinent rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes of the SMAQMD. Caltrans supports SMAQMD's efforts to pass rules regarding construction emissions, which would apply equally to all contractors. SMAQMD had proposed two tentative rules regarding construction emissions: Rule 1052, Construction Mitigation and Rule 1025, Construction Equipment Fleet. The status of these rules is unknown.

Response L17b
Parking facilities are determined by the local jurisdiction based on the associated land use and transit service. The City of Sacramento has an approved Central City Parking Master Plan based on its land use assumptions. A substantial increase in total cars is not anticipated. Please refer to Response W1j.

Response L17c
The US 50 Bus/Carpool lanes are intended for use by carpools and buses, particularly commuter express buses. Improved travel time for buses using the lanes will provide an incentive for commuters to shift modes (for instance, the success of El Dorado Transit's service). Please refer to Chapter 2.5 of the EIR/EA for further information regarding transit. Please refer to Response L16v.

Response L17d
Please refer to Caltrans Standard Specification section 7-1.01, Air Pollution Control (www.dot.ca.gov/hq/esc/oe/).

Response L18a
Please refer to Responses W1j, E1a, and L7a.

Response L18b
Please refer to Responses W1j, E23a, and L5f. Alternative 10D-3, which does not extend into the City of Sacramento, is the preferred alternative.

Response L18c
Please refer to Response W1b.

Response L18d
Please refer to Responses W1j, E22a, E23e, and L7k.

Response L18e
Please refer to Response E23f.

Response L19a
Bus/carpool lanes have been demonstrated throughout the State and in the Sacramento region to be effective in providing for the movement of more people, in fewer vehicles, and more quickly. The high demand on freeway facilities is due to local development patterns, not bus/carpool lanes. Please refer to Response E19a.

Response L19b
State and Federal guidelines require all agencies, including Caltrans, to consider mitigation/abatement of noise impacts during the environmental process. There are a number of considerations to be analyzed when a sound wall is being considered. These range from the cost of the sound wall per benefited residence to opinions of the impacted residents and local agencies, the economic make up of the impacted area is not one of these considerations. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has the responsibility to ensure that environmental justice is being upheld. Environmental Justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Sound walls are proposed along westbound and eastbound US 50 between Bradshaw Road and Sunrise Boulevard. Please refer to Section 2.13.3 and Figures 2.1-1j to 1o in the EIR/EA.

Response L20a
Comment noted.

Response L20b
The use of bus/carpool lanes on US 50 during peak commute periods will have trip destinations concentrated at job centers, particularly downtown Sacramento and Rancho Cordova. West Sacramento is also recognized as a regionally important job center with plans for significant expansion of office buildings across the Sacramento River from downtown Sacramento. To the extent that employees at these facilities travel on US 50 from El Dorado and east Sacramento counties, they will benefit from the proposed bus/carpool lanes if they choose to carpool. The bus/carpool lane restrictions are not in effect on weekends.

Other Comments

Response 01a
While Caltrans does not necessarily have control over CHP monitoring, Caltrans has proposed several areas along the corridor to provide safe enforcement areas for CHP to perform their duties. Please refer to Section S-2 for a list of potential CHP enforcement sites.

Response 01b
Drainage and hydroplaning are always a Caltrans concern regarding the highway system. The drainage facilities are being modified in accordance to the roadway work being performed. In addition, a rubberized asphalt concrete (Open-graded) pavement will be applied to the highway when the widening is complete. The open-graded paving is a nonstructural wearing course with the primary benefit of improvement of wet weather skid resistance, reduced potential for hydroplaning, reduced water splash and spray, and reduced night time wet pavement glare.

Response 01c
There are sound walls proposed at the locations where metal fences constructed originally by developers exist along the corridor. The new sound walls will have an aesthetic treatment and will replace or screen the metal fencing as conditions allow. Sound wall placement will be dependent of the utility easement conditions/restrictions and the exact location of the utilities. Please refer to Sections 2.6.4 and 2.13.3.4 for information regarding proposed sound walls.

Response 01d
Caltrans maintains changeable message signs (CMS) at various locations along US 50 in the Sacramento region. These signs provide information on traffic conditions, including lane closures. In the future, travel times may also be provided.

Response 01e
This comment is more appropriate for the City of Sacramento. The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTC) has standards for a welcome sign, but the City would need to take the initiative, and then coordinate with Caltrans. There are currently city limits signage and "To State Capitol" signage. It should also be noted that additional signage is not necessarily beneficial since the driver can be inundated by 'sign pollution', defeating the purpose of signs.

Response 02a
Please refer to Response E12a.